

Message Text

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ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 IO-14 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-16 EUR-25 NEA-10

RSC-01 OIC-04 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 DPW-01 ACDA-19 SCS-03 SCA-01 DRC-01 /175 W

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4532

INFO USUN NEW YORK 169

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 1570

DEPARTMENT FOR MAW FROM ALDRICH

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ICRC, PARM

SUBJECT: LAWS OF WAR CONFERENCE AT MIDPASSAGE

1. AFTER NEARLY THREE WEEKS OF LARGELY POLITICAL WRANGLING, THE CONFERENCE HAS FINALLY ADOPTED ITS RULES OF PROCEDURE AND ESTABLISHED ITS FOUR MAIN COMMITTEES. ALTHOUGH PLENARY GENERAL DEBATE ENDS ONLY ON MARCH 11, EACH COMMITTEE HAS HELD ITS FIRST MEETING, AND SUBSTANTIVE AMENDMENTS AND PROPOSALS ARE FOR THE FIRST TIME BEING INTRODUCED. WE AND OUR FRIENDS ARE IN BEST POSITION FOR THIS NEXT PHASE OF OUR WORK BECAUSE WESTERN GROUP, AND WESTERN GROUP ALONE, HAS HELD SUBSTANTIVE PREPARATORY AND DRAFTING MEETINGS THROUGHOUT PERIOD OF CONFERENCE.

2. DURING POLITICAL PHASE OF CONFERENCE, FOLLOWING ARE OUR PRINCIPAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS: DENIAL OF INVITATION TO PRG; ACCEPTANCE (ONLY TODAY) OF DECENT RULES OF PROCEDURE, INCLUDING TWO-THIRDS VOTE REQUIREMENT FOR ADOPTION OF
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TEXTS AND OTHER MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE; FORTUNATE

SELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR KEY POSTS, INCLUDING HAMBRO OF NORWAY AND SULTAN OF EGYPT AS CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES, BAXTER OF U.S. AS RAPPORTEUR OF COMMITTEE DEALING WITH RULES OF COMBAT AND PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS, AND MYSELF AS CHAIRMAN OF THE WESTERN REGIONAL GROUP.

3. PRINCIPAL SETBACKS HAVE BEEN ADMISSION OF GUINEA-BISSAU AND (ALBEIT WITHOUT RIGHT TO VOTE) ARAB AND AFRICAN NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, DELAY IN SUBSTANTIVE WORK, AND POLITICIZATION OF ATMOSPHERE. WORK NOW SEEMS ON TRACK, BUT TIME LIMITS (CONFERENCE SESSION ENDS MARCH 29) WILL MAKE PROGRESS THIS SESSION MUCH LESS THAN WE WOULD HAVE HOPED.

4. WITHIN CONSTRAINTS IMPOSED BY NEED TO WIN PRG ISSUE, I HAVE CHAIRED WESTERN GROUP AND STATED U.S. VIEWS IN PLENARY AND SOMEWHAT MORE BLUNTNESS THAN IS CUSTOMARY. THIS HAS ANNOYED A FEW DELEGATES, BUT REFLECTS MY VIEWS THAT LDCS WOULD BE WILLING TO STOP PRESSING FOR FURTHER CONCESSIONS AND ACCEPT COMPROMISES ONLY WHEN CONFRONTED WITH FIRM LINES BEYOND WHICH WESTERN STATES WILL NOT GO. ASIDE FROM BRITISH, EUROPEAN SUPPORT FOR TOUGH LINE LEAVES MUCH TO BE DESIRED, BUT THUS FAR LDCS HAVE APPARENTLY NOT NOTICED THE THINNESS OF THE RANKS BEHIND US. DALE

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